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TWO DISCOURSES

ON OCCASION OF

THE DEATH

OF THE LATE

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MINISTER OF THE ASSOCIATE BURGHES CONGREGATION,
CAMPBELL-STREET, GLASGOW.

BY THE

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AND THE

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SERMON I.


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S E R M O N.

HEBREWS vii. 8.

“ And here men that die receive tithes ; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.”

THE design of the Apostle in the first part of this chapter, is to prove and illustrate the superiority of the typical priesthood of Melchisedec above that of the sons of Levi. To enter into any controversy respecting Melchisedec, or even to state the different opinions that have been entertained of this illustrious person, would be very unseasonable on this solemn and mournful occasion. I shall only observe, that he could not, as some have supposed, be the Redeemer, who just for that occasion assumed the appearance of a man ; for in this case the Apostle would never have asserted that Melchisedec was “ made like unto the Son of God,” or that Christ was constituted a “ Priest after the order of Melchisedec.” Though a very singular character, he seems to have been a mere man, raised up by God to be an eminent type of him, who is the “ High Priest of our profession.”

When he is said to be “without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life,”—we are not to conclude that he had no human extraction, or that he never died; but only, that the holy Scriptures give no account of his father or mother—of his birth or death; and that, in the office of priesthood, he had no predecessor—no partner—no successor. In this respect, he fitly represented our great High Priest, who was without father, as man, and without mother, as God,—whose existence is from everlasting to everlasting,—and whose priesthood is of perpetual duration.

In the verse to which I intend, at this time, to direct your attention, the Apostle institutes a comparison between Melchisedec and the priests of the order of Aaron—showing that the former is greatly superior to the latter: “And here men die that receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.” In the case of the sons of Aaron, according to the law of Moses, they who received tithes were mere sinful dying men, whose office descended to others, and at last became extinct: but, in the case of Melchisedec, he who received tithes of Abraham—the great ancestor of the priests of the house of Levi—is represented as *living*, having none to succeed him in his office; “by which it is intimated that a Priest should arise, to whom the whole Israel of God would pay their devoted homage, and from whom they would receive the blessing.”

Without noticing the difficulties with which, as some

interpreters have supposed, this passage is attended,—or attempting to state the points of resemblance between Melchisedec and Christ; I shall consider the text, on the present occasion, as contrasting the mortality of those whom God calls to the office of the holy ministry, with the immortality of Him, who is an High Priest for ever, and of whom it is witnessed that he *liveth*.

In the following discourse, I propose, in the *first* place, to make some observations respecting those who are invested with the office of the holy ministry, and their mortality; and, in the *second* place, to direct your attention to the immortality of Christ as a source of consolation to the Church—especially when her faithful and beloved pastors are removed by death.

On the first part of the subject, I observe,

In the *first* place, that those whom God invests with the sacred office of the ministry are *men*. “Here *men* that die receive tithes.” The office of the holy ministry is the most noble and interesting to which any mortal was ever called. Angels of the highest order would have reckoned themselves highly honoured, had they been invested with it; and, if we may judge from the delight with which they announced the birth of the Redeemer to the shepherds in the plains of Bethlehem, and joined in chorus to celebrate the glorious event, they would have fulfilled it with alacrity and faithfulness. But angels are not the instruments whom God has chosen to convey his message of salvation to mankind, and to plead with them to accept of his proffered mercy. In different ages, in-

deed, they have been sent forth from the throne of the Eternal to publish the determinations of infinite wisdom. As ministering spirits they are still employed in performing many endearing offices to “the heirs of salvation.” But they were never intended to be the permanent ministers of the church, for dispensing the ordinances of the gospel. As the gospel is to be preached to *sinners of mankind*, it has pleased God, in all ages, to call *men* to proclaim the “glad tidings of great joy” to their fellow-sinners; and in so doing, he has peculiarly displayed his wisdom and condescension.

Had angels been intrusted with this message, would not the glory and splendour of their appearance have been apt to confound those to whom they were appointed to convey it? From scripture we learn, that mankind have often been filled with fear and alarm—that they have trembled and fallen at the appearance of these spiritual messengers. When God, by the ministry of angels, delivered his law from Mount Sinai, we are told, that “all the people who were in the camp trembled. And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.” When the angel appeared to the shepherds of Bethlehem, and the glory of the Lord surrounded them,—it is said, that “they were sore afraid.” In condescension, therefore, to our weakness, God has been pleased to employ men like ourselves in the dispensation of the Gospel.—Besides, were beings of a superior order invested with the office of the ministry, it is evident, that they could not possess an experimental feeling of those

distresses in which mankind, to whom the Gospel is to be preached, are involved by sin, and for which the Gospel alone exhibits a remedy. Not being partakers of our nature, angels cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. If our blessed Redeemer, though the Son of the Highest, behoved to assume our nature, and, “in all things to be made like unto his brethren,” that he might be enabled to sympathise from experience, and inclined to compassionate the distresses of those, of whose flesh and blood he is a partaker; surely none can be so well qualified for dispensing the Gospel as those who are partakers of the same nature with the persons to whom it is to be dispensed, and who have been in the very same circumstances with themselves.—In fine, had angels been appointed to the office of the holy ministry, the proofs of Almighty power—in turning men “from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God”—would not have been so conspicuous. Much of the efficacy attending their labours would, in all probability, have been attributed to them,—while the Divine operator might, in a great measure, have been overlooked. “We have this treasure”—the Gospel—not in golden vessels as angels, but “in earthen vessels”—mortal men—“that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” *

But I observe, in the *second* place, that those who are invested with the office of the holy ministry are men,

* 2 Cor. iv. 7.

liable, like others, to infirmities—to diseases, and to death. “Here men that *die* receive tithes.” From the infirmities that are common to mankind ministers are not exempt. Not advertng to this, many are disposed to make no allowance for their frailties. They suppose that they should seldom, if ever, discover any of the common weaknesses of erring humanity. But many of those who were most distinguished for their gifts and graces, had infirmities that tended greatly to obscure their lustre. Both Moses and Aaron, though eminently holy men, were condemned to die in the wilderness, “because they trespassed against the Lord among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh; and because they sanctified him not in the midst of the children of Israel.” Respecting Elias, the Holy Ghost particularly remarks, that, although he was a great reformer in Israel, a noble testimony-bearer against apostasy, and distinguished for his influence in prayer, “he was still a man subject to like passions as we are.” As under the law men were made “high-priests who had infirmity,”—the case is still the same under the gospel. The infirmities of Peter and Paul, of James and John, and of other eminent saints of the Most High, are recorded in scripture to warn others against the temptations into which they fell, and to declare to the world that a sinless perfection is not to be expected from any mere man in this life, even though invested with the sacred office of the ministry.

Like other men, ministers are also subject to diseases and to death. How feelingly does the apostle Paul re-

mind the Corinthians of the sufferings and dangers to which he was exposed in fulfilling his ministry! “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you.”* Though from those severe trials to which many of their forefathers were exposed, the ministers of religion are, at this day, mercifully exempt; though they are not called to suffer bonds and imprisonments, or to seal their faith with their blood, yet their deep concern for the souls of those who are under their care—their close confinement—their sleepless nights, and their incessant labours and anxieties, often lay the foundation of many painful diseases—the harbingers of death. Hence few of them, comparatively, live to old age. Under the disease which terminated the earthly career of your beloved pastor, he seems to have long laboured. His medical attendants have declared, that it must have existed for eighteen or twenty years; that, during that period, he must have suffered severely; and that he could have obtained relief only by taking exercise in the open air. And now that these circumstances are known to us, we cannot help ex-

* 2 Cor. iv. 8—12.

pressing our regret that he had not, at least on some occasions, more of our sympathy. But the patience and composure with which he endured all his sufferings, deceived even his most intimate associates as to the progress of the disease; and, though some of them had of late begun to entertain fears that it would, ere long, terminate in death, they had little idea that he would be cut off so soon.

Even the most eminent servants of the Lord are not, any more than other men, immortal in this world. Like the rest of the human race, they are liable to death in consequence of sin. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* "Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?"† No. Moses and the prophets are dead. Aaron and the priests of his order are dead. The apostles of our Lord are dead. And none of those who are *now* invested with the office of the holy ministry, any more than the priests under the law, can "continue by reason of death." They are sinful mortal men, appointed to die, and to leave their office in succession from generation to generation. If the people would seriously consider this, it would tend to excite them to a more diligent attendance on their ministrations. It is not uncommon for persons when tempted to loiter at home on the sabbath, to say in excuse, "We have indeed lost a sermon, but it is of no

* Rom. v. 12.

† Zech. i. 5.

great consequence, we can hear our minister again." But were they to reflect, that their minister is a mortal man, and that every sermon they hear from him may be the last—instead of staying at home, or discovering the utmost listlessness in the house of God, how would they exert themselves to hear every sermon he preaches, and to catch every word as it flows from his lips! When your late worthy pastor last addressed you, few, if any of you, I suppose, entertained the idea that you would never hear him again. On that occasion, however, he seems to have had a sort of presentiment that his departure was approaching. When, at the conclusion of the public services of that day,* I said to him, that I had never heard him deliver with more ease and fervour, he replied, "I have, indeed, been greatly helped by the Lord to-day; but in the evening I addressed my hearers with all the earnestness in my power, under the impression that it would be the last address of the kind I would ever deliver." And so it was. As an hireling, he has fulfilled his day; as a soldier, he has accomplished his warfare; as a witness, he has finished his testimony; and as an ambassador, he has been recalled to give an account of his embassy. And, brethren, may we not indulge the animating hope, that not a few of those to whom he ministered will meet him in a better world, where the languors of imperfection, the inroads of disease, and the pangs of separation, will be unknown and unfelt for ever? "These are they," said

* The day on which the Lord's Supper was last dispensed at Glasgow.

the angel to the beloved disciple, “who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”*

In the *last* place, I observe, that to the Church and to society, the removal of faithful ministers, though unheeded by many, is a very severe loss. The prophet Isaiah mentions the disregarded removal of good men, as an evidence of the wickedness which *then* prevailed, and as a sad pre-sage of approaching calamities. “The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.”† The death of God’s faithful servants is to themselves the greatest benefit, and to others the greatest loss that can be conceived. Their souls enter into those peaceful regions, where there is nothing to hurt or destroy; and their bodies repose in the silent grave, where “the wicked cease from troubling, and where

* Rev. vii. 14—17.

† Is. lviii. 1, 2.

the weary are at rest:" but their departure is an indication of the Divine displeasure, and portends, and makes way for, the judgments of the Almighty. Few, however, are suitably affected with such mournful events. They do not lay them to heart, nor consider them as a public loss. But, though little regretted, the loss sustained by the church and by society, upon the removal of faithful ministers, is very extensive. To the Israelites, the death of Moses was one of the greatest losses they ever met with. The departure of Elijah, though gloriously triumphant, was a calamity to the nation of Israel exceeding the destruction of its best appointed armies. Hence Elisha, under a sense of his own and Israel's loss, exclaimed, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." Faithful pastors, while they live, are the salt of the earth, the pillars of the world, and the "key-stone of society;" they diffuse blessings around them, and form the strongest defence of the land in which they dwell. Hence, when they die the loss must be great. By their death, the benefit of their public ministrations—by which the church is instructed, and society ameliorated—is lost. How great also is the loss of their friendly visits—their fervent prayers—their hearty counsels—their tender sympathies—their reproofs, admonitions, and warnings—and their pious example!

You are witnesses, brethren, and God also, with what fidelity your late beloved pastor fulfilled his ministry. For some years his labours among you were immense. When I considered the business he had to perform of a sessional

nature,—the great number of families which in one week he sometimes visited,*—the different public meetings he attended,—the respectability of his discourses,—and the ardour with which he delivered them, I often expressed my astonishment, that he did not sink under such extraordinary exertions. And now when I reflect, that even *then* he must have laboured under the disease that has brought him to the grave, my astonishment is greatly increased. For some time past, through the increase of his disease, his ardour was somewhat abated, and the duties of his office were somewhat burdensome. I have known him, after visiting persons in severe affliction, to be so affected with the sight, as to unfit him, in some measure, for his other ministerial services.—His steadfast adherence to the principles, which, at license and ordination, he became bound to maintain, is well known to many of you. In this respect, he never could make any compromise. Nor did he ever hesitate to sacrifice friendship rather than principle, when both could not be maintained. To hold principles opposed to those of the society with which he was connected, and, at the same time, continue

* It was not uncommon for Mr Turnbull, in the course of his ordinary visitation, to exhort and pray in above twenty houses in one day, and in the evening to visit several sick persons.—He has also been known to have preached ten or twelve times in the course of eight days, without neglecting his other official duties. Yet none ever heard him boast of his services, or find fault with his brethren for doing less than he did,—so much did he dislike every appearance of a Pharisaical spirit. Well might one of the ministers of Glasgow say of him—“He has been a very efficient minister,—but has fallen a sacrifice to his ardour.”

in its communion, he always considered to be dishonest. His plain dealing, on this point, did expose him to opposition and reproach; but his noble mind they staggered not for a moment. Warmly attached to the standards of the Church of Scotland, he openly and fearlessly defended them when necessity required—from a conviction that they were “agreeable to, and founded on the word of God;” and though he saw it his duty to testify against the corruptions of that Church, he hailed her late attempts at reformation as the dawn of a brighter day. Having finished his labours on earth, we trust that he has given his account with joy, and that he has received the approving testimony of his great Master,—“Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

I now go on, *in the second place*, to direct your attention to the immortality of Christ, as a source of consolation to the Church—especially when her faithful and beloved pastors are removed by death.

“Here men die that receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that *He liveth*.” All men, whatever be their station, die. Husbands die—parents die—ministers die; but Christ liveth.—He liveth in his *divine nature*. In this view, his life is underived and independent. Being possessed of the same divine nature with the other persons of the adorable Trinity, he must be, equally with them, the fountain of life—on whom all creatures depend for life, and who depends on none for his. In this respect he may be said to be the “First and the Last,”—“the blessed and only Poten-

tate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality." In his *human nature* he has also an "endless life." In this nature he was once numbered with the dead; but he is alive again, and lives for evermore. Hence the cheering declaration which he uttered to the disciple whom he distinguished by his love,—“ I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”—“ He liveth” as *God-man Mediator*. The scriptures represent him as God and man in one person. In this character he liveth. As Mediator he has a personal immortality. He will for ever live as “ Immanuel, God with us.”—“ He liveth” in all the important *offices* he assumed in the character of Mediator. He is invested with the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; and in all these offices he liveth for ever.

On this part of the subject, I might have shown you, that the immortality of Christ is a source of consolation to the saints under an overwhelming sense of sin—under breaking dispensations—and under the fears of dissolution.

But passing these, I shall shortly advert to the three following ideas, as more applicable to our present circumstances: Christ liveth to preserve the church—to supply her with faithful ministers—and to bestow upon them a glorious reward.

In the *first* place, Christ “liveth” to preserve the church in defiance of all opposition. Ever since the revelation of mercy to our first parents in the garden of Eden, the opposition of Satan and his agents has been

strong and incessant. To accomplish the destruction of the Church, they have tried all their subtilty, and exerted all their strength. Idolatry, and superstition, and fraud, and violence, and disgrace, and tortures, and heresies, and corruptions, have all been employed for this purpose. "The heathen have raged, and the people imagined a vain thing; the kings of the earth have set themselves and the rulers taken counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed." But every effort has proved unsuccessful. The kingdom of the Redeemer, after all the struggles it has sustained, subsists to this day. The mightiest empires which once gave laws to the world, and seemed to lay claim to perpetuity, have long ago been swept away with the besom of destruction. But the Church, though she has existed nearly six thousand years, still remains. And why? Because her Head "liveth." "He liveth" who has purchased the Church with his own blood; and who, though now enthroned on high amidst thousands and tens of thousands of his ransomed ones, is not careless of his little flock in the pathless desert. "He liveth," who turns all the wheels of Providence as he pleaseth, and regulates all events, however complicated and mysterious they may appear to us, in subservience to his own everlasting plans and designs. "He liveth," who has been with his Church in all former generations—who has all along watched over and protected her, and who is still as able to save as ever he was. The instruments he employs in the Church's preservation are indeed often removed; but his power ceaseth not. "Is the

Lord's ear heavy, that he cannot hear? or is his hand shortened, that he cannot save?" Remember, brethren, that his strength remains undecayed by the lapse of time, and undiminished by constant exertion. To him all opposition is infinitely "less than a little dust in the way of the whirlwind, or a single particle of vapour before the sun in his rising glory." Your great High-priest, believers, not only "liveth," but he "liveth *for evermore*." And therefore, when all the kingdoms of this world shall have perished, and all their pageantry shall have passed away as a dream, the Church shall exist in that better country where no weapon can ever wound—no enemy can ever annoy. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn." "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there."*

In the *second* place, "He liveth" to supply the Church with faithful ministers. A faithful Gospel ministry is the gift of our exalted Redeemer to the Church which he has ransomed. The Apostle tells us, that "when he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men: he gave some apostles—and some *pastors and teachers—for the work of the ministry*." By sending forth faithful ministers, the living Head of the Church gives gifts unto men; and when these are removed by death, he raises up others to fill their places, and to carry on his work. Aaron died;

* Is. liv. 17; xxxv. 9.

but Eleazar his son was arrayed in his hallowed garments, and invested with his office. Moses died; but Joshua was appointed to take his place, and to conduct the chosen tribes to the land promised to their fathers. Elijah ascended, soul and body, to heaven in a chariot of fire; but a double portion of his spirit rested on Elisha, his successor. Stephen was stoned to death; but Paul was converted, and called to the office of the ministry.—Your late much beloved pastor is gone. But is all gone? No. Christ “liveth” to provide for you. Your spiritual father is no more; but your “everlasting Father,” on whose shoulders is the government of the Church, continues. Your under-shepherd is removed; but the “chief Shepherd is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.”—And, brethren, it is truly consolatory, that, though ministers die, the word of God lives and abides for ever; and that, though there is no security against temporary vacancies, in particular congregations, a Gospel ministry will be continued in the Church until time shall terminate, and eternity be laid open. This is secured by the promise of the Redeemer: “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, *I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.*” *

In the *last* place, “He liveth” to bestow on his faith-

* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

ful ministers a glorious reward. He sends none “a warfare on their own charges.” Even on earth they can testify, that they do not serve him for nought. Need I here mention the tokens of his gracious presence—the testimonies of his approbation—and the seals of their ministry, with which they are favoured, as constituting no mean reward annexed to fidelity in the service of their great Master? “For God is not unrighteous to forget their work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope.”—But the reward which I have now particularly in view, is that which they receive when their labours are finished. The apostle Peter exhorts all who are called to the work of the ministry, to perform it with diligence and fidelity, animated by the prospect of an unfading crown of glory which they shall receive, when the chief Shepherd—from whom their office is derived, on whom they depend for supplies, and to whom they must give account—shall appear to judge the world in righteousness. “Feed the flock of God which is among you, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”* Of this reward the apostle Paul speaks in the view of his approaching martyrdom: “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also who love his appearing.”† But it ought always to be carefully kept in view, that

* 1 Pet. v. 2, 4.

† 2 Tim. iv. 8.

their services, however eminent, do not *procure* this reward. They are in no degree meritorious. The reward is entirely of grace reigning through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. It is the gift of Him who liveth for ever. But the reward and the work are indissolubly connected together:—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."* "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."†

Without saying any thing farther respecting our departed friend—as something more on this point may be expected from the Lord's servant who is to address you in the afternoon—I shall conclude this discourse by tendering to you a word of exhortation.

Ever bear in mind, my believing brethren, that your High Priest liveth to sympathise with you under all your trials, and to repair all your losses. "We have not," says the Apostle, "an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."‡ Perhaps your losses are such as no one on earth is able to repair. You are ready to say with David,—“I looked on my right hand, and beheld; but there was no man that would know me. Refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul.” But your High Priest, who liveth in heaven, is able to make up every loss. Have you lost a husband? He is the Husband of the widow; and therefore he will

* Rev. ii. 10.

† Dan. xii. 3.

‡ Heb. iv. 15.

afford you all that protection, and discover to you all that kind attention which this endearing relation implies. Have you lost a father? He is the Father of the fatherless. However forlorn and destitute your situation may be, your heavenly Father, who can never die, says—"I will not leave you comfortless"—or fatherless—"I will come unto you." Have you lost a brother? He is a Brother born for adversity. "Go to my brethren," says Christ, "and tell them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." Have you lost a friend? He is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. No change in your outward circumstances can, in any degree, abate the ardour of his affection, or induce him to withhold his support. "With him is no variability, neither shadow of turning." He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Have you lost a faithful minister? He is the Minister of the upper sanctuary. He walketh among "the seven golden candlesticks," to preside over them, and to supply them with oil. He "holdeth the seven stars in his right hand," not only to support and direct them, but to replace them when extinguished by death. When, therefore, you deplore the loss of a beloved pastor, mourn in hope, that, instead of the fathers, he will take the children; and that there will be a succession of faithful ministers in the Church till the end of time.

Farther, seek to cherish a lively faith in your living High Priest; and this faith will revive your fainting spirits, and soothe the anguish of your hearts. The eye of

faith directed to Jesus will see, that, while he snatches from you the desire of your eyes—your sweetest earthly enjoyments—it is to moderate your affections to creature comforts, and to give you more substantial, more refined, and more lasting enjoyments, in himself as your portion. O that this faith may lighten your burden of sorrow, and sweeten your cup of affliction!—The lively exercise of faith in your living Redeemer will bring you into a calm acquiescence in the will of your heavenly Father, under the painful bereavement with which you have been visited. You are not, indeed, forbidden to mourn. To be indifferent, in your present circumstances, would be unnatural. But you are not to “sorrow as others who have no hope.” Instead of fretful repinings, say with the Psalmist, when severely tried—“I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.” It was the will of your Father that your pastor has been taken away. And has he not a right to do with his own as he pleaseth? “Behold he hath taken away, and who can hinder him?”—Remember, brethren, that you also must die. But exercising faith in Him, “of whom it is witnessed that he liveth,” you may contemplate the hour of your departure with unspeakable joy. Christ has the keys of hell and of death. Fixing your eyes on his atoning sacrifice, and confident that he who has promised to deliver, is able also to perform, you may triumphantly exclaim with Paul—“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the

victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”—In fine, amid all the changes of this chequered scene, and all the heart-rending separations to which you are exposed, look forward to that happy period, when He, “of whom it is witnessed that he liveth,” “shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;”—when he shall open the graves of his people, and with almighty energy command the dead to come forth;—when faithful ministers, and those in whose conversion and edification they have been instrumental, shall meet together at the right hand of the Lamb, and shall be each other’s “crown of rejoicing;”—when you shall no more be called to sympathise with your friends and relatives overwhelmed with affliction, or to weep over the dying and the dead;—and when you shall ascend with your divine Redeemer to his Father and your Father, and to his God and your God, and shall associate in perfect bliss with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs—with the cherubim and the seraphim—with the bodies and “spirits of just men made perfect.” “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

As for those among you who have held out against all the warnings, and reproofs, and invitations, and promises, and offers, which your late pastor delivered to you—I confess I am at a loss in what manner I should address you, or what I should say unto you. Yet I cannot think

of closing this discourse without one effort more, to arouse you from your spiritual slumbers, and to set before you your privilege and your duty. Know then, O sinners, that you are not only mortal, or liable to death, but that you are already dead in the most awful sense of the term. You are “dead in trespasses and sins,”—destitute of the favour and image of God, and under a sentence of condemnation. “He that believeth not is condemned already. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” If you continue in unbelief and impenitence, eternal death will assuredly be your portion. And O! who can tell what is implied in eternal death? Who can conceive the awfulness of the “vengeance of eternal fire?” “The Lord Jesus,” we are told, “shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” “Let sinners in Zion then be afraid; let fearfulness surprise the hypocrites: who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who shall dwell with everlasting burnings?”

But know, O sinners, that from eternal death there is a Deliverer; and to this Deliverer I would direct you. “I am,” says Christ, “the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” “The hour is coming and now is, when

the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God : and they that hear shall live.” Whatever you are, or whatever you may have been—though you have hitherto despised the offers of salvation, contemned the opportunities of grace, slighted the warnings of Christ’s faithful servants, and squandered away your precious time in the service of the devil—the Saviour of sinners is earnestly inviting and entreating you to come to him and accept of his proffered blessings. Your access to him is not suspended on any personal qualifications ; the Gospel warrants you to come to him as guilty and perishing sinners, and to receive all his blessings freely. “ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me ; hear and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” “ As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways and live : turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways ; for why will ye die ?” I beseech you then, sinners, in the bowels of compassion and in the spirit of love, to flee to Jesus as your only refuge. Receive him by faith as presented to you in the Gospel. The door of mercy is still open ; but in a little it will be shut for ever. The

glad tidings of salvation may never be again proclaimed in your ears. And are you willing to run the risk of being driven, before the rising of another sun, into that dismal abode where the blackness of darkness for ever reigns, where the fire of Divine vengeance for ever burns, and where the wailing of despair is for ever heard? “Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation.” “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Amen.

A P P E N D I X.

I HAD scarcely begun to transcribe the preceding discourse, when I received the mournful notice of the death of the Rev. ROBERT TORRANCE, minister of the Associate Congregation of Airdrie. While I deeply sympathize with his family under this bereaving dispensation, I cannot but drop a tear to the memory of one with whom I had agreeably associated in my younger days, and for whom I had always entertained the highest respect. On the Sabbath following his funeral, I preached—to my own congregation—on these words of the Prophet Isaiah—“The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.” After considering the characters mentioned in the text—their death—and their happiness after death, I concluded with an address of which the following is a part:—“I am persuaded, brethren, that the most of you have, ere now, perceived that throughout this discourse I have had a particular reference to the death of the Lord’s servant, which I announced to you last Sabbath. To him the characters in the text—“righteous and merciful”—were peculiarly applicable. On all occasions, he discovered the utmost candour and uprightness. Having put on bowels of mercy, he tenderly sympathized with the distressed, and affectionately succoured them—so far as he had it in his power—under all their trials.—His death was awfully sudden. It would appear that he had

gone out, I believe in the after part of the day, to visit the sick, and returned in the evening considerably fatigued. After taking some refreshment, he retired to bed, and was instantly seized with palsy, which deprived him of the use both of his speech and limbs. Medical aid, however, being speedily obtained, he recovered, in a great measure, the use of both, and continued, apparently, better, till between eight and nine o'clock next morning—when, becoming very uneasy, and attempting to rise, he leaned his head on the bosom of the partner of his affections—closed his eyes—and died. His soul, we doubt not, brethren, has entered into peace, while his flesh rests in the hope of a better resurrection. Thus two of the Lord's servants, in the same Presbytery, have, within the short space of two months, been taken away in the mid-time of their days. Their sun has gone down at noon. What an awful voice do these unexpected events send forth to those who survive!" "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

The following appeared in the Glasgow Chronicle, a few days after his funeral:—"Suddenly, at Airdrie, on the 21st ultimo, the Rev. Robert Torrance, pastor of the Associate Congregation there, in the 54th year of his age, and 28th of his ministry. Mr Torrance was deservedly eminent for his classical attainments,—especially he excelled in Greek and in Hebrew, the original languages of the sacred volume. But what was of far greater importance, (as mere classical acquirements can never constitute ministerial excellence—though they are too often talked of as if they did) he had a most accurate knowledge of the Gospel of Christ—and preached it with great faithfulness, plainness, and perspicuity—altogether unaccompanied with ostentatious parade. Very few knew the Scriptures so well, or could intermingle them with a discourse, so fluently and appropriately as he. Mr Torrance was quite a working minister of Christ, and associated very much, not only with his own people, but with those of all denominations, in the discharge of his functions. Nor did he follow in the

train of the rich and great only, as if they had been alone entitled to a minister's attention. He was most humble and dutiful to the very poorest—aware that in the sight of Him “who is no respecter of persons,” their souls are as intrinsically valuable as those of the affluent. His domestic kindness was proverbial, and long must his widow and family have reason to drop a tear over the grave of a husband and a father, in whose bosom tender-heartedness occupied a prominent position—and who made it his daily object to promote their happiness—while his congregation, and the public generally in the neighbourhood of Airdrie, must feel his sudden departure as a very melancholy dispensation—“though they have no reason to sorrow as those who have no hope.” Mr Torrance's remains were accompanied to the grave, in the burying ground of the church in which he had ministered nearly thirty years, by a large assemblage, composed of a number of the clergymen of his own communion, the clergy and magistrates of Airdrie, and almost all the respectable part of the inhabitants, while a great many spectators, eager to behold the scene, and to throw the eye of sorrowful recollections over his sepulchre, evinced the regard in which he was held. On the Sabbath after his funeral, the services were conducted by the Rev. Mr Hill of Shotts, who officiated at the earnest request of the Session and congregation, as well as of the family of the deceased. The subject was in Hebrews xiii. 7, 8. verses. “Remember your guides or leaders, who have spoken to you the word of the Lord, whose faith follow—considering the end of their conversation—Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” The audience was extremely large, and most solemn and attentive.”

SERMON II.

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH

OF THE LATE

REV. ALEXANDER TURNBULL,

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM MACKRAY,
STIRLING.

S E R M O N.

1 THESS. iv. 18.

“ Comfort one another with these words.”

SOME godly members of the Thessalonian church had been removed by death. Their removal occasioned sorrow to those who remained behind—no doubt peculiar sorrow on the part of those who had been connected with them by the ties of nature, as well as by the bonds of grace. They were in danger of being swallowed up of overmuch grief—of giving way to demonstrations of sorrow, unsuitable to their character, their faith, and their prospects, as believers in the gospel of Christ. Such conduct on their part the apostle deprecated. In reference to the dead it would be unavailing;—to their own minds it would be hurtful;—and, particularly, it would be unworthy of the glorious truths and hopes of the religion they had embraced. It would afford the heathen among whom they dwelt an occasion of slandering the religion of the cross, as affording no better consolation under the afflictions of

life, and in the prospect of death, than their own wretched and gloomy superstitions. To counteract this tendency, therefore, on the part of the Thessalonian Christians, the apostle reminds them of the blissful disclosures the gospel makes respecting the condition of the friends of Christ, on their removal from this fleeting scene. They are “fallen on sleep”—they “sleep in Jesus”—safe and honourable, united to his person, and under his care. The years of many generations may revolve ere they awake; yet is the period drawing nigh when their long slumber shall be broken. Jesus, their Lord and Redeemer, will “descend from heaven” in glory, with his mighty angels—will gather their sleeping dust from all the territories of the grave—will fashion their bodies after the splendour of his own—reunite them to their glorified souls, and pass with them into the “mansions” of his “Father’s house,” where they shall be blessed for ever in the society of each other, and of angels, and of their beloved Lord. “Wherefore,” says Paul, concluding this most tender and sublime passage of his epistle, “comfort one another with these words.”

No, my brethren, it is not grief, but *immoderate* grief, that Christianity forbids. When our beloved friends, who have been endeared to our hearts by the affectionate sympathies of many years, and who have assiduously cared, not merely for our temporal welfare, but for the best interests of our undying souls, are removed away from us into the land of silence and forgetfulness—O, it is impossible in such a case *not* to weep! and weeping, in such a case, Christianity does not condemn. When we read

the histories of Holy Writ, we find the beloved son of Jacob mourning with a great and very sore lamentation over the remains of his aged sire,—“devout men” carrying out Stephen “to be buried,” and shedding hallowed tears over his sacred dust;—nay, we find HIM, in whose blessed person humanity was perfect, vindicating and ennobling the tears of Martha and Mary, by mingling *his* with *theirs*, at their brother’s tomb:—at the grave of Lazarus “JESUS WEPT.” It is *immoderate* grief that Christianity forbids:—the grief of poor heathens, before whose view the disclosures of the Gospel have never shed any light on the scenes of futurity,—the grief of the ungodly, and of mere worldly men, who part with their beloved friends without any hope of meeting them again amidst the bliss of a better world,—the grief, in short, of unbelief, distrust, and despair. This is forbidden. It is dishonourable to Christ and his religion—unsuitable to the faith and the hope of those who believe in him—and at utter variance with those strong consolations which the Gospel administers in reference to the departed friends and servants of the Lord.

Such grief, my brethren, it is not for *us* this day to indulge. We assemble, indeed, in circumstances of a very mournful kind. The honoured and loved individual who so often spoke to you the words of salvation from the place where I now stand, will address you no more. In the very midst of his days and extended usefulness he has been removed from amongst us. You, his beloved family, and his beloved people, will enjoy the testimonies

of his affectionate and faithful regard no more. And we, his brethren in the holy ministry, to whom on many grounds he was so justly endeared, will no more in this world hear his counsels or enjoy his friendship. On such an occasion, our feelings cannot but be in unison with those of the afflicted elders of the Ephesian church, when, falling on the neck of their beloved Paul, “they wept sore, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more.” But, brethren, let us “not sorrow as others who have no hope:” Let us remember, that there are “words” of consolation in that Gospel which our departed friend so faithfully and affectionately proclaimed, with which we are privileged and exhorted to “comfort one another.” With these he himself often comforted you, in reference to the godly friends of whom you were from time to time bereaved: and with these I would this day wish to comfort you, under the melancholy dispensation which has called him away.

I. With what sentiment can I introduce my consolatory advices to you on this mournful occasion, more properly, than with that which of old time relieved and composed the mind of the afflicted Psalmist of Israel,—“THE LORD HATH DONE IT.” “I was dumb,” said the holy man, “I opened not my mouth, because THOU DIDST IT.” Yes, it is our duty to remember in days of tribulation, that no adversity springs from the dust—that none of the events which chequer the history of our families, or con-

gregations, or the church at large, take place from chance. *This* is the doctrine of Atheism, and if it were true, we might well weep over the dust of revered friends the tears of hopeless, despairing regret. Like Rachel sorrowing for her children, we might refuse to be comforted, “because they are not.” But this gloomy doctrine is *not* true. Revelation impresses on it the brand of utter and everlasting falsehood. It lifts up the curtain that conceals from our view the unseen world, and discovers to us Jehovah presiding in high providential administration, over the whole universe;—ordering alike the movements of its mighty orbs, and the concerns of the minutest individual of the numberless beings by whom it is peopled. “The hairs of your head are all numbered.” “He hath appointed the bounds of your habitations—the number of your months is with him.” Even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his controlling view. And revelation, at the same time that it unfolds to our view the great doctrine of Jehovah’s superintending government, exhibits the saints of God, in days of adversity and sorrow, recognising it, and acting under its influence. Over the bodies of his two sons, smitten with death before his eyes, “Aaron held his peace.” “Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?” inquired the man of God at the bereaved Shunammite;—she answered, “It is well.” “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away,” exclaimed the afflicted patriarch of the land of Uz, “and blessed be the name of the Lord!”

HERE, then, take your station, Christian mourners! on

this day of sorrow. Is it the husband of your youth—or the parent who was the guardian of your infant years—or the pastor who “watched for your souls,” as they that “must give an account,” who has been removed away from you, and whose mortal remains you have followed in bitterness of heart to their long home?—O, remember, “GOD HATH DONE IT!”—HE hath done it who is sovereign—who “doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth,”—in whose hands we are “as the clay in the hands of the potter,” and who has an indisputable right to dispose of us, and our friends, and our enjoyments, and of all his creatures, as seemeth good in his sight. The scenes of adversity, my brethren, especially such scenes as that around which we are this day assembled, are emphatically those in which we are called to recognise and glorify the sovereignty of God—to “be still, and know that HE IS GOD.”

But this is not all. Abstract views of the sovereignty of God may *silence* the mind, but other considerations need to be introduced, and seriously weighed, in order to produce kindly submission, and minister consolation.—Nor are these wanting.

HE hath done it—HE hath made this melancholy blank in your domestic circle, and in your congregation, who is not only sovereign but JUST. He doth all things well. “Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?” It is true, my friends, *mystery* is deeply, O! how deeply! inscribed on his dispensations. His way is “in the sea, and

his path in the great waters." "Clouds and darkness" are round about many of the events that chequer the history of his servants and his church, which will never be scattered till they reach that world of light and glory, where they "shall know," as they "are known," and where "that which is in part shall be done away." THERE, Christians, all mysteries shall be explained—all the perplexing events that have drawn forth the amazement and grief of your hearts will be accounted for—and you will join with multitudes who, in every age, have been the subjects of these mysterious dispensations, in proclaiming to the honour of divine faithfulness and love—He hath done all things well! Meanwhile, the present state is the scene where God's people must "walk by faith;" and *this* is one of the great consoling truths on which their faith must rest—and according to their faith in which, their minds will be composed in the day of sorrow—that, though "clouds and darkness are round about him, justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne." *You cannot see* that this dispensation is well. You have lost a beloved pastor and friend, in the midst of his days and labours, and in the prospect of extended usefulness! "Who could think," as the pious Mr Durham said, on the experience of a very trying bereavement, "that this would be *for good*, unless the Lord had said it?" But, brethren, he *has* said it, and it is for you to honour him by believing it. "We will believe the equity of Jehovah, and, even under the sore smitings of

his hand, we will confess and adore the righteousness of his procedure.”*

ANOTHER consideration, I beg to suggest to you, on this part of my subject, than which, I am sure, to those who fear and love God, nothing in the day of sorrow can be more consoling. HE hath done this—HE is the author of this mysterious bereavement—who is MY OWN, CHOSEN, COVENANTED, GRACIOUS, GOD. I trust, my brethren, there are not a few of you who can entertain, on good grounds, this endearing view of the character of God. He is *your* God! Well, what unspeakable consolation is there amidst the sorrows of such a bereavement as this, in the recollection, that he who hath seen meet to visit you with it, is *your own God!* Here, my friends, is “firm footing”—here is “solid rock.” “When my heart is overwhelmed,” prayed the afflicted Psalmist, “lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” *This* is that rock. How high! How stable! What a glorious place of safety! In the clefts of this rock, how secure shall we be against the power of the severest adversity! The God of providence is my own God. He gave himself to me as my God. He gave me grace to choose him as my

* Memorable are the words of the Archbishop of Cambray, when informed of the death of the duke of Burgundy, to whom he had been preceptor, and for whom he had the most tender affection:—“If I knew,” said he, bursting into tears, “that by the turn of a straw I could recover him to life, and yet at the same time was assured that it was contrary to the will of God, I would not do it.”

God—"O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord!" I have taken hold of his covenant, and will abide by it as "all my salvation and all my desire:" And, although he has seen meet to remove away from me a much endeared friend, an affectionate parent, a faithful and beloved instructor, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God:" He is *my* God, and, to those who fear him, and hope in his mercy—he will not only do no wrong, but will make all things "work together for good." Yes, my brethren, the affectionate child will sometimes stand astonished, and burst into tears, at the mysterious frown of a beloved parent. But it will be recalled. I know my parent too well to think he can have become my enemy. There must be some design in this conduct of which I am not aware. I will wait the issue. Children of God! do likewise.

II. Allow me, *in the second place*, to remind you, on this day of sorrow, of the BLISSFUL and GLORIOUS CHANGE which death effects in the condition of the saints and servants of the Lord. They are gone from *us*—*we* feel the loss of their society—but *to them* death has been "*gain*," and, if we truly loved them, we will rejoice, because they have gone to "their Father." "For me to live," said the apostle of the Gentiles, "is Christ, and to die is gain;" and I am sure, the much-loved and honoured pastor and friend, whose loss you this day deplore, was prepared to speak in the same high and hallowed strain. "For

the glory of Christ—for gaining souls to him besides those who are already gained—for edifying and comforting his people, I am resigned—I am even *desirous* to live; but, should my hour be come—should the conclusion of my ministry on earth have arrived, I have the humble but substantial hope, that, for me to die, will be great gain!” Yes! to your beloved pastor, the event that has occasioned to you and to his surviving brethren in the ministry so much sorrow, has been, we doubt not, great “gain.” Often have you heard him dwell, as if with raptured mind, on the “rest” which “remaineth for the people of God;” and now, sooner than *we* could have wished, he knows that “rest” in all the richness of its glory and its joy. Permit me, for *my own* consolation, as one to whom your beloved pastor was much endeared, and for *your* consolation, so unexpectedly deprived of his valuable ministrations, to suggest to you two blissful features in the condition of the departed saints and servants of the Lord: They are released from all the evils of this present life, and they are introduced to the possession of unmingled happiness.

Negative though the former of these considerations be, it involves an amount of good, greater than in this “vale of sorrow and of tears” we can comprehend. It is much, we all know, to be freed from *one* trouble, *one* anxiety, *one* sorrow, pressing on and laying waste the mind;—but, what must it be to be set beyond *all* troubles, *all* anxieties, *all* sorrows; and that not for a few days or years, but during a succession of ages that will never

end!—"Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble." He is "born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." Having sinned—he suffers. "His entrance into the world is announced by the voice of weeping, and through every stage of future life, tears, on one ground or another, continue to flow till they are dried up in the dust of the grave." Nor are the heirs of glory, the friends of Jesus, placed beyond the reach of the tribulations and sorrows of time. They are subject to all the infirmities and pains of their fellow-men; nay, are more generally afflicted and tried than they. It is their "Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom;" but he will lead them to it "through much tribulation." And, moreover, the children of God are exposed to distresses and sorrows with which worldly men are altogether unacquainted. They have many a painful thought, and fear, and disquietude, arising from spiritual causes—from circumstances connected with their own spiritual interests, and those of their fellow-men, and their prospects for the everlasting state. Death concludes all these. They may last till death, but they will last no longer. That day of clouds, and darkness, and weeping, in which the saint of God bids farewell to this world and all its concerns, is the day in which all these pains and sorrows are parted with for ever.

This world is the scene of TEMPTATION. "The accuser of the brethren" has it, in the meantime, greatly as the region of his power, and carries on in it a malignant warfare against Christ and against his people. He seeks

“to have them, that he may sift them as wheat;” and the melancholy thought is not seldom forced in on their minds —“one day I shall fall by the hand of this foe.” Death sets the friend of Jesus eternally beyond his power. In the world to which his disembodied spirit wings its blissful flight, his presence and his temptations have no place. Entering the gates of “the Jerusalem that is above,” the happy soul may take up this triumphant song, “O enemy, destructions have a perpetual end! Many a fearful and desponding thought hast thou occasioned me while I sojourned in yonder vale of tears; but now, these are ended for ever. Temptations to depart from and offend my God, I shall henceforth never know!”

This world is the scene where the children of God are not unfrequently sorrowful under THE HIDING OF THEIR FATHER’S “COUNTENANCE;”—the consoling apprehension of their interest in God is far away. The causes of this I do not stay at present to investigate. Unquestionably, the guilty cause is often with themselves. “The consolations of God” are often “small” with them, because they have with them “some secret thing.”* At the same time, I have no doubt that, in *sovereignty*, and for the accomplishment of important ends, God sometimes permits those who fear him to be in this distressed condition.—“Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.” —“The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me.”—“Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious—hath he in anger shut up his tender mercy—will he be

* Job xv. 11.

favourable no more?"—These are expressions which intimate the bitterness of hearts apprehending the withdrawal of the Divine favour—experiencing the loss of "the light of God's countenance." The face of their heavenly Father may be covered—or they may apprehend it to be covered—with a frown,—“clouds and darkness, and thundrings, and lightnings,” may be round about, and may cover all his throne,—and its canopying “rainbow,” the pledge of peace and love, may not be seen. Ay, and on *that* day—the one in all their history in which they stand most in need of the light of their Father's countenance—it may not be enjoyed. Like their blessed Redeemer, they may leave the world under a cloud. Nay, they may be unable or afraid to say, what forsaken Jesus said—“My God!”—O! my brethren, what a blessed change takes place on that day in the condition of the children of God! Passing from the scene of pilgrimage, where they have often gone “mourning without the sun,” they enter a world of light, over which, through everlasting ages, there shall not rest so much as one darkening or disturbing cloud. No child of God in that happy world shall ever walk in darkness. No “thundrings” will ever be heard—no “lightnings” ever seen—issuing from the throne. The clouds and the darkness will be scattered from around it, and the countenance of “HIM who sits” on it, beaming divine complacency, eternally beheld.

Nor let it be forgotten, in reference to all the FAITHFUL SERVANTS of the Lord, that, while they are subject

with their fellow-men to the afflictions of this present life, and with fellow-christians to *their* varied *spiritual* distresses—they are exposed to bitterness of heart *peculiar to themselves*. I need only refer on this point to the seriousness of their official responsibility. They have their own souls' salvation to secure; but, moreover, they are intrusted with the care of the souls of others. They have to look to their own "vineyard;" but they have also, to a certain extent, to keep the vineyard of others. They have to exhort and to warn their fellow-men to "give all diligence" to make their "calling and election sure;" meanwhile, they have to fear, lest, "after having preached the Gospel to others," they themselves should be cast away. Such a responsibility might well induce an Apostle to exclaim—"Who is sufficient for these things?" And sure I am, no mind but his own can tell the anxiety, and pain, and sorrow, which the man who would be faithful to souls is made to experience, if he has the melancholy apprehension that sinful and immortal beings are passing away from under his charge, unawakened, unbelieving, unholy. For this he "weeps in secret places;"—with the mourning prophet, he could wish that his "head were waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night for these slain of the daughter of his people." * In the *future* world,

* "Ah! my brethren"—was the language of the eminently pious Joseph Alleine to the beloved flock from whom the infamous act of uniformity, in 1662, removed him—"why should you not all be happy? How it grieves me that any of you should fall short of mercy at last; that any of the flock,

these sorrows are unknown. The servant of the Lord has “warned the wicked from his evil way,” and has “delivered his own soul.” He has fulfilled his stewardship, and has entered “into the joy of his Lord.” He has gained souls to Christ, and “edified” the saints; and they are now his “CROWN.”

In fine, this world is the scene of MORTALITY—a region of dead and dying men. “Death hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned.” In holy Scripture we find this last event that chequers the earthly history of mankind represented by images of the most emphatic and solemnizing nature;—an “enemy,” most formidable, whom we have all to encounter, and whose power cannot be resisted,—a “king of terrors,” the very

over which the Holy Ghost hath made me overseer, should perish! Ah, dear brethren, I was in great earnest with you, when I besought you, out of the pulpit, many a time, to give a bill of divorce to your sins, and to accept of the mercy that, in the name of Almighty God, I did then offer you. Alas! how it pitied me, to look over so great a congregation, and to think that I could not, for my life, persuade them, one quarter of them, to be saved! How it moved me to see your diligence in flocking to the most hazardous opportunities, since the law forbade my public preaching; and to think that many of you, who went so far, were like to perish for ever, for want of going farther. How fain would I carry you farther than the outward profession! O how loath am I to leave you there! How troubled to think that any of you should hazard much for religion, and yet miscarry for ever by the hand of secret pride, or untamed passion, or, which I fear most of all, a predominant love of the world in your hearts! Alas! is there no remedy? Must I carry you to heaven’s gate and leave you there? O that I should leave the work of your souls but half done, and bring you no farther than the almost Christian!”

thought of whom is adapted to fill the mind with dismay,—a “Jordan” rolling along its heavy and resistless tide, through whose deep waters we must pass,—a “dark and dismal vale,” through which we must all take our solitary way. These, my brethren, are no exaggerated comparisons, no hyperbolical similitudes. We do behold it to be a serious, *most* serious and solemn thing to die,—to encounter this enemy—to grapple with this king of terrors—to wade through this Jordan—to traverse this dreary vale—to do so, as far as *human* friends are concerned, *alone!* At thought of it our poor humanity shudders; and through fear of it some, even of those whose death is “precious” in God’s sight, are “all their lifetime subject to bondage.” But this is the consoling reflection in reference to the saints of God:—death is to them “the *last* enemy,” and is destined to be destroyed,—a “king of terrors” who has been disarmed, and shall be finally overthrown,—a Jordan, through whose swelling tide “the High priest of our profession” will conduct them, and beyond which stretches forth in all its richness and glory the promised land,—a “dark valley” through which the divine Shepherd will safely lead them, and, emerging from which, he will show them “the path of life, in God’s presence, where there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore.”

Yes, my brethren, the death of the children of God is a triumph. Its external circumstances may be dark and painful. The pressure of disease may destroy recollection—the force of trouble may seal up the tongue—

and they may be unable to acknowledge, and claim, and commend, when dying, that gracious God who “led” them all their life long, and whom, many a time in preceding days they delighted to claim and to commend as their “father,” their “friend,” their “portion for ever.” In death, nevertheless, they triumph. He in whom they have believed, in dying, overcame: and the triumph of the Head secures that of his members in their respective times. And in heaven death is abolished. *There*, there is “no more death, nor sorrow; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.”

All this is much. It is much to know, respecting the godly friends who have left us, that they have entered on a state from which all the evils that afflicted them in this vale of tears are eternally excluded. We sympathise with them in this world when we behold them in pain and distress; we wish, and feel pleasure in their deliverance. How much more—if we could regard matters as we ought—would we experience consolation, in knowing that they are delivered from all infirmities and all sorrows—placed beyond the reach of all evil—exalted to a holy and happy world, where there shall be nothing through unceasing ages “to hurt or to destroy!” But this is not all. They have entered on the enjoyment of PERFECT BLESSEDNESS. It is not given to us, indeed, in the present state, to describe their felicity. “Caught up to the third heaven,” Paul tells us that the things which he saw and heard were “unspeakable.” At the same time it is a cheering thought, that when the saints and servants of God are

removed away from us by death, they *do* enter into a scene, where they are not only delivered from the sorrows of their pilgrimage, but made partakers of positive and exalted felicity. And although, in this state of darkness and imperfection, we know comparatively little of their condition in the better world, there *are* circumstances which, we are sure, constitute ingredients in it, and to the possession of which it is cheering to our minds to think that those whom we regarded with affection are exalted.

They are PERFECT IN HOLINESS. On earth they were imperfect. "Brethren," would the most sanctified of them say with holy Paul, "I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." That mark they have now reached. The glorious character for which they longed, and sighed, and prayed, while pilgrims in the vale of tears, they now possess. Their sanctification is complete. They have "seen the face of God in righteousness," and they are "satisfied with his likeness." They have been presented by their exalted Head, faultless, "before the presence of his Father with exceeding joy;" and now "are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple,"—to know the imperfections, and wearinesses, and pains, that oftentimes characterised their holy services on earth, no more for ever.

They are blessed in the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. "This,"

said the divine Saviour, while he yet tabernacled on earth, “this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” This knowledge it was their privilege, in the day of their spiritual “betrothing to the Lord,” in some measure to attain. It was the element of their life of grace, and it now constitutes, in a more exalted degree, the element of their life of glory. How ennobling is it to think of the wondrous expansion of mind they enjoy, *now* that the day of heaven has broke on them, and the shadows of this imperfect state have fled away,—of the wider and still wider grasp which their glorified minds are enabled to extend over the character, the works, and the ways of God—over the mysteries of creation, providence, and redemption;—and of the sublime delight they experience in traversing these boundless fields of celestial truth! Here, they saw “through a glass, darkly;” there, they see “face to face.” Here, they “knew in part, and they prophesied in part;” there, “that which is perfect is come, and that which is in part is done away.”

In short, **THEY ARE WITH CHRIST.** This was the promise of their Lord, which cheered their hearts while sojourning in the vale of tears—“Where I am, there shall ye be also.” This was the subject of his intercession on their behalf—“Father, I will, that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given me.” This they esteemed “far better” than even their highest spiritual enjoyments on earth: for this they were willing, they “desired to depart,”

and now their desire is fulfilled. They have reached the mansions of their Father's house—they are with their exalted Lord, and behold, in its unveiled effulgence, that glory, which, even when seen on earth by the eye of faith, transformed and gladdened their souls. They “see him as he is,”—no more “the man of sorrows,” having “his visage marred more than any man, and his form than the sons of men,”—but realizing, in all its splendours, the transfiguration of Tabor. They see him in the glory of his manifested godhead, and in the possession of those mediatory honours with which he is invested. They behold him in sacerdotal glory—the representative of his Church—advocating her cause before the celestial throne, and leading the worship of the celestial sanctuary. They behold him in prophetic glory, the light of heaven. In short, they behold him encompassed with regal honours—having “a name above every name,”—acknowledged as “head over all things,”—receiving homage and worship from every order of holy beings. And this vision of glorified Christ is the vision of him as *their own* Redeemer, who hath “redeemed them to God by his own blood,” and brought them by his power and grace to the realms of bliss. And it is accompanied with the undisturbed assurance of their Father's love, and the unclouded light of their Father's face. What, my brethren, shall we say more? They are now come, in the full import of the words, “unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels—to the general assembly and church of the

first-born, that are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." O blessed change which death accomplishes in the condition of a saint of God ! We think—we cannot but think—with regret of the days and years of affectionate and endeared intercourse that are past,—we feel pained at the thought of parting,—we look in silent anguish on the cold and lifeless form of our much-loved friend, and accompany it in sorrow to the mansions of the dead. But, O ! while we are thus engaged, the disembodied spirit has winged its exulting way to other and happier climes, and is now blessed in the presence of its Father and God. It has exchanged a frail "tabernacle" for a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,"—a chamber of disease for a region of unfading health,—"tribulation for joy,—the groanings of corruption for the songs of the redeemed,—and this earth, with all its disasters and woes, for the beatitudes of heaven, and the rapturous enjoyments of the presence of God." "These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat: for the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe

away all tears from their eyes.” “Comfort one another, Christians, with these words.”

III. Remember, that YOUR GOD AND SAVIOUR EVER LIVES. “Fear not,” is his own language, “I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death.” And, my brethren, whether you regard this blessed truth in its bearing on the calamities with which God is pleased to visit, from time to time, his individual people, or on the desolations which death is producing in the Church, by the removal of her able and faithful ministers, it is full of consolation. When our hearts are awakened to mourning and sorrow by the sudden and melancholy loss of those who have been dear to us as our own soul—when, having left them in the house of silence, we go back into the world, and feel as if it were now to us a blank and desolate scene; and when we look forward to future days, and anticipate approaching difficulties, and trials, and sorrows, under which the counsels and consolations that formerly guided and cheered us, will be far away,—O! in such a case as this, how supporting and gladdening is it to think that our Lord and Redeemer never dies! “God liveth,” said the afflicted Psalmist, “blessed be my Rock:” and this thought, realized by faith, and carried home to the heart, with gracious power by the Holy Spirit, will stay the Christian’s mind amidst the deepest adversities with which he can be assailed. Earthly relatives are frail

and fading, and may leave us, but our heavenly Father abides the same. Earthly comforts may be withdrawn, but the great Comforter never dies. And, my brethren, how easy is it with God to compensate unspeakably to those who fear him, every blank he is pleased to make in the circle of their affection by the communications of his love! Has he not done so? Did he not do so to Jacob of old time, when a solitary and mournful wanderer from his father's house; to Joshua, when, having deprived him of the presence and the counsels of his venerable predecessor, he cheered him with the promise, "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee;"—to David, when persecuted in the wilderness, insomuch that the psalms of his exile are the sweetest of all;—to Solomon, when, pained by the removal of his aged parent, he sought and obtained wisdom from the Lord? In short, did he not do so very remarkably in the experience of the Apostles of Jesus? They were troubled at the thought of his departure, identifying his presence among them with all their consolation, and with the prosperity of their cause. But he "saw them again," and invigorated them with such strength from on high, as made them joyful in tribulation, and prepared them for appearing before the presence of kings and councils, "rejoicing that they were called to suffer shame for his name's sake." These things he has done to his people in former days, and has not forsaken them. And is he less faithful *now*? Is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; or his arm shortened, that it cannot save? Are his sympathies toward his people less

tender, and less energetic than in days of old? No, Christians: and what if one important design of afflictive dispensations—the removal from you of those in whose love, and sympathy, and counsel, you were wont to confide—be to convince you of this blessed truth more than ever you have been convinced;—to bring you nearer to himself—to shut you up more closely to his kindness—to give you experimental evidence, that “as your days are,” he can make your strength to be, that, as your sorrows abound, he can make your joys to abound also?

And, as to the public interests of the Church, when her faithful ministers are removed away from her, more especially when they are removed ‘unexpectedly, and apparently in the very midst of labour and usefulness,—where can we find refuge and consolation more amply than in the blessed truth we are presently contemplating? Ministers, the most eminent and most beloved, may not continue by reason of death. Our spiritual “fathers, where are they?” and “the prophets, do they live for ever?” Nay, and often at the very time when our warmest regards are drawn forth to them, and our most sanguine expectations rest upon them,—as if to show us most convincingly that their great Master is independent of all instruments,*—their days are cut off, and they pass away.

* Memorable were the words of the eminent Dr Owen, on his death-bed, expressing this sentiment. Dark clouds were brooding over the church. It was the day of Zion’s perplexity. “I am leaving,” said he, “the ship of the Church in a storm, but the great Pilot is with her; while he is in her she is safe, and the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable.”

But Jesus, the minister of the upper sanctuary, ever lives. He has gone within the celestial veil; but he has gone thither for the express purpose of caring for his Church. She is “graven on the palms of his hands,—her walls are continually before him.” HE knows best “the times and the seasons:—how long to continue his servants in his Church—what work to assign them—and when to remove them. But HE LIVES, ye inhabitants of the city of God! and it is your hope and joy that he does so—to carry on his purposes of mercy among the children of men: and while, from time to time, he removes the “messengers of the churches” from the scene of their ministrations, He has “the residue of the Spirit,”—He holds in his right hand “the seven stars” from age to age in all their fullness, and will continue to do so until the light which they are the medium of diffusing throughout the world of grace, shall be swallowed up in the more refulgent light of the world of glory.

IV. If we are Christians indeed—have part and portion in Him who was the God and Redeemer of our pious friends—WE SHALL, ERE LONG, MEET THEM AGAIN, NEVER TO PART. This, my brethren, is a consideration emi-

It well became *him*—a man of such eminence and usefulness in the Church, to use such language: and, I am sure, the beloved friend, whose lamented removal has given occasion to these discourses, would, if it had been given him to tell, in the day of death, the sentiments of his heart, have spoken the same language of genuine humility and confidence in the life and power and faithfulness of Christ.

nently adapted to awaken all the sensibilities of every affectionate and pious heart. Our departed godly friends are now in heaven. Would we wish them back to earth? “from the sweets of glory to the bitterness of time—from the rivers of pure celestial pleasures, to the mingled streams in this vale of sorrow”—from the peaceful haven, to the storms of this boisterous ocean? No, surely: loving them, we rejoice that they have gone to the Father. But, we desire to go where they are. Yes, brethren, we all know the attachment which we feel to the spot where the *bodies* of our friends are laid to their long repose. Judah was endeared to Nehemiah as “the land of his fathers’ sepulchres;” and the wish is natural to us all, that our dust might at last be gathered to kindred dust. It is, indeed, in many instances, a wish never realized. We have seen the young, and the aged too, carried, in mysterious providence, far from the scene of their nativity, to die in places they never knew, and be laid at last among the dust of strangers. Still it is a wish that exists with greater or less energy in every bosom. The thought that the mortal remains of this or the other beloved friend repose in a particular spot, attracts our hearts to that spot, and hallows it in our esteem. Should not this be much more the case with respect to their *departed spirits*? Are *they* in heaven, whom we once loved on earth, and whose memory we will never cease to have in our affectionate remembrance? Should not this operate in endearing the thought of heaven to our hearts? It is true, the blissful presence of God and of the Redeemer

is that which constitutes the highest glory of the heavenly country, and for which it is especially to be desired. But it is interesting and endearing to consider the heavenly country as the abode of friends whom we have known and loved, while sojourning in this foreign land; and it is cheering to be able to indulge the thought that we shall meet them there. At present, we feel the pain of separation. We think of the time when we conversed with them; but the breath departed we cannot recall. We go to the scene where we communed with them; but they are not there. We listen where we were wont to hear them speak; but the well-known sound is no more heard. We wish them back to comfort us, but our wishes are vain. We are obliged to conclude our meditation with the melancholy thought, that they are gone from us never to return, and that their bodies lie, in gloom and silence, in "the house appointed for all living." But what then? Their disembodied spirits are happy in the exercises and enjoyments of a better world; and, if we be followers of their faith, and patience, and holiness, we shall, ere long, meet them again, where the pang of separation is never known. Yes, my brethren, be they the guides and protectors of our early days, or the friends and instructors of our riper years, who have been removed from us into darkness;—imitating their pious conversation, we shall shortly rejoin their society, and participate their bliss, in that happy world, where the heart shall never be wrung by the pang of separation,—where "adieux and farewells are a sound unknown." Never more shall we say,—

“ Lover and friend thou hast put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.”

“ A few short years of evil past,
We reach the happy shore,
Where death-divided friends at last
Shall meet to part no more.”

And sure we are, that although the relationships which exist on earth—of husband and wife, parent and child, pastor and people—will have no place in the future world,—the design of them being realized,—they will, nevertheless, be remembered. And who can tell what will be the rapture with which pious parents and pious children, faithful pastors and the people for whose souls they cared, will meet each other in the world of glory, and think of the instrumentality they respectively had in bringing each other to those blissful realms? *This* will enhance inconceivably the felicity of heaven.

I have thus, my brethren, endeavoured to bring before your view some considerations with which we are furnished in holy writ, and with which we are exhorted to comfort one another, under the loss of godly friends, and eminent and useful ministers of the church: and I indulge the hope, that, through the blessing of God, they will be in some measure effectual in moderating your grief, and tranquillizing your minds, under the melancholy bereavement you have experienced. I cannot conclude this discourse without adverting for a few moments to the char-

acter of the friend and pastor whose loss we have this day assembled to deplore. And in reference to him, your feelings, I am sure, correspond with mine when I say, that the best and most hallowed memorial of his worth will be found in the love and veneration with which he will long be remembered—by you, among whom for more than twenty years he ministered in the gospel,—by the numerous circle of his friends,—by every portion of the church where he was known,—and by his surviving brethren in the holy ministry. Ten years have elapsed since I was brought to enjoy the privilege of his friendship; and I would be unfaithful and ungrateful if I did not say, that more pleasant hours than those I have spent in his company—whether engaged in the exercises of public or private devotion, or in the conversation of the domestic circle—I have never enjoyed. His mind was stored with knowledge: his acquaintance, particularly with the truths of revelation and the history of the church, was extensive and judicious; and whether his discourse turned on the one or the other of these subjects, it was impossible to be in his society without deriving both edification and delight. As a Christian, his piety was serious, solemn, conscientious; but unostentatious, unobtrusive. His bereaved family bear witness, by their silent anguish, that, as a husband and parent, he was affectionate, faithful, kind. His brethren in the ministry, who most intimately enjoyed his acquaintance, can testify that his friendship was ardent and unwavering, and continued unweakened to his friends till the close of his life. As a minister of Christ, his

praise is throughout the church. In the mind of many a Christian whom he never “saw in the flesh,” and whom he will never know till they meet on high, his memory will be embalmed long after he has gone to his glorious “rest,” as the honoured instrument of their preparation for everlasting life. As for you, my brethren, ye remember how he went out and in amongst you, instructing, exhorting, counselling, comforting you, proving himself “a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Many souls, I doubt not, have gone from among you, during the last twenty years, who will recognise him as their spiritual father; and many, I trust, remain behind, who will be found to have been the “seals of his ministry,” and in the day of Christ will be his glory and joy. By the Synod, of which he was so long a universally esteemed and beloved member, his loss will be felt to be—I had almost said—irreparable. The prudence, and talent, and judicious zeal with which he engaged in the promotion of its business and its interests, will be long remembered among his brethren with affection; and the absence of one so deservedly respected and beloved from their meetings will long cast over them a melancholy gloom. To his honour be it said, in this day of hollow-hearted profession, he *was*—what he professed to be—a *genuine* seceder. Intimately acquainted with the constitutional principles of the Church of Scotland, on behalf of which the Secession Testimony was originally displayed, he retained his attachment to them during all his life, and was not ashamed—when he judged

himself called in providence—conscientiously and fearlessly to avow and defend them. I cannot conclude these allusions to the character of our departed friend, without adverting for a moment to the affecting circumstance, now distinctly ascertained, that arduous as his labours were for the spiritual welfare of his people, they were rendered more arduous still, by the unapprehended pressure for many years of that disease which has now brought him to the dust of death. His heart was in his Master's work, but agonizing, many a time, must have been his feelings in the prosecution of it. "Painfulness and weariness" attended his ministerial life. Even in the midst of his earlier labours, the messenger of death appears to have been secretly undermining his seemingly vigorous frame, and hasting him on to "the house appointed for all living."—And now, my brethren, he is gone. His day of work on earth is over. In silence and sorrow we have laid his body in its "long home;" and his immortal spirit, we doubt not, has entered into the joy of his Lord. It remains for you—for all of us, to improve the solemnizing dispensation.

In reference to *him*, if you loved him, you will rejoice, because he is "gone to the Father." But, for *yourselves*, allow me to remind you, a solemn responsibility rests on you for having so long enjoyed his valuable ministrations. *His* "heart's desire and prayer to God for you" was that you "might be saved." Many a time, I am sure, did he cast his eye over this large congregation, and think, in the fulness of his benevolent heart, how blessed it would be if

he and you should meet in glory. Brethren, beware, lest any of you be among the number of those who are “hewn” by the Lord’s prophets, and “slain by the words of his mouth.” Beware, lest, after all the days and years you have sitten under the faithful and arousing ministry which you will now enjoy no more, you be yet “in your sins,”—unconverted, unsanctified, lost. Be entreated, by the mercies of God, by the worth of your immortal souls, by your regard to the memory of *him* whom you will see in this world no more, to call to remembrance, and to improve *now*—if you have not improved before—the many precious truths, and solemn warnings, and affectionate exhortations, which in the course of his ministry he addressed to you. Anticipate the day of death—most certainly approaching to every individual in this assembly—when, eternity opening on the view, and heart and flesh fainting and failing, the worth of vital religion will be seen and felt as it never was before. And think of that “day of dread decision,” when you and your departed pastor shall meet again. O, that it may be on the right hand of the Judge, and that he may be able to say of you, “Behold, I and the children thou hast given me!” “Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure.” “Remember them that have had the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”

Brethren of the Eldership in this congregation, remember *your* increased responsibility. And now, when an able and affectionate pastor has been taken from you,

let me urge you to go—as did the disciples of John, when their Master was removed from them—and “tell Jesus;” tell him your loss—your sorrow—your perplexities—your insufficiency for the charge that has devolved upon you. Remind him of his own promises to his church, and plead them before him. He has “the residue of the Spirit,” and so long as he has gracious purposes to accomplish in any place, or among any people, he will not want instruments by whom they shall be fulfilled. “Do for us, O God, the Lord!”

In a considerable portion of the preceding discourse, I have had particularly in view the condition of the family which this dispensation has plunged into bereavement and sorrow. But I cannot conclude without again sympathising with them, and commending them to God. Your adversity, my mourning friends, is sore—“the hand of God hath touched” you. We would feel for you—we would weep with you. But we would wish, at the same time, to comfort and counsel you. There is a friend on high who is “the father of the fatherless, and the judge of the widow.” Hear his gracious language: “Cast thy fatherless children upon me, and let thy widows trust in me:” “Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name:” “I will be a father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” To him we commend you. Take his promise as “the joy and rejoicing of your heart.” Plead it from day to day at his throne of grace. He will accomplish it. He will be your Husband, your Father. He will provide for

you—comfort—you—guide you—go down with you through all the scenes of your future life—and will not leave you until he has done that which he has spoken to you of. When the image of a beloved husband and parent recurs to the view of your mind, let it be recognised calling you to follow his faith, and patience, and devotedness to God. *This* is the best tribute of love you can pay to his memory—thus will you have communion with him still—and thus will you be warranted to indulge the hope of meeting him again, in that blessed world, where sickness, and separation, and sorrow, are for ever unknown.

“Brethren, the time is short.” “The end of all things is at hand.” “Be ye, therefore, ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.”

THE END.

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